Claims:

1. An initial value-setting system (10) for setting the initial available numbers of times of unitary use (P) of prepaid available number-of-times-of-unitary-use storage media (8) for making use of a certain toll or pay service, the initial value-setting system (10) comprising a means for receiving purchase-application data on each medium (8) including its purchase date and time (DT) through a communication network (N), a storage area for storing the opening date and time (DTS) of advance sale of the media (8), a storage area for storing the closing date and time (DTO) of the advance sale, a storage area for storing the closing date and time (DTE) of ordinary sale, as distinct from the advance sale, of the media (8), and an initial value-setting means for setting the initial numbers (P) of media (8) with purchase dates and times (DT) between the opening and closing dates and times (DTS and DTO) higher than those (P) of media (8) with purchase dates and times (DT) between the closing dates and times (DTO and DTE).

2. An initial value-setting system (10) as claimed in claim 1 of which the initial value-setting means sets the initial numbers (P) of media (8) with purchase dates and times (DT) between the closing dates and times (DTO and DTE) in a way such that the earlier the purchase dates and times (DT) of the media (8) are, the larger the initial numbers (P) of the media (8) are.

3. An initial value-setting system (10) as claimed in claim 1 of which the initial value-setting means sets one and the same number (P) for all media (8) with purchase dates and times (DT) between the opening and closing dates and times (DTS and DTO).

4. An initial value-setting system (10) as claimed in claim 1, 2, or 3 including a storage area for storing a target annual sales (Z) of the media (8), a storage area for storing a selling price (K) of the media (8), a storage area for storing a toll (E_0) expressed in a number of times of unitary use of the service, a storage area for storing a most preferential initial number of times of unitary use (A) applicable to media (8) purchased during the ad-

1

vance sale, and a storage area for storing the sales (YT) from the opening date and time (DTS) to the purchase date and time (DT) of each medium (8), the initial value-setting means having a function $f_1(DT)$ to calculate the number of days (C) from the closing date and time (DTO) to the purchase date and time (DT) of each media (8), a function $f_2(C, A, E_0)$ to calculate a preferential initial number of times of unitary use (m) at the purchase date and time (DT) of said medium (8) based on the number of days (C), the most preferential initial number of times of unitary use (A), and the toll (E_0), a function $f_3(m, Z)$ to calculate the ratio (X) of the preferential initial number of times of unitary use (m) of said medium (8) to the target annual sales (Z) of the media (8), and a function $f_4(X, YT)$ to calculate the final initial number of times of unitary use (P) for said medium (8) based on the ratio (X) and the sales (YT) at the purchase date and time (DT) of said medium.

5. An initial value-setting device (1) which is a computer and provided with the initial value-setting system (10) according to claim 1, 2, 3, or 4.

6. An operating system of prepaid available number-of-times-of-unitary-use storage media (8) for making use of a certain toll or pay service comprising the initial value-setting device (1) according to claim 5 which sets the initial available numbers of times of unitary use (P) of the media (8) and has a means for transmitting the initial numbers (P), purchase-application-data input devices (2) each to input and transmit purchase-application data on each medium (8) to the initial value-setting device (1) through a communication network N, writing devices (3) each to receive the initial number (P) of each medium (8) from the initial value-setting device (1) through the communication network N and write the initial number (P) in said medium (8), and rewriting devices 4 each to rewrite the remaining available number of times of unitary use of said user's medium (8) every time each user makes use of the service.

7. An operating system of prepaid available number-of-times-of-unitary-use storage media (8) for making use of a certain toll or pay service comprising (i) the initial value-setting device (1) according to claim 5 which

2

sets the initial numbers of times of unitary use (P) of the media (8) and has a means for transmitting the initial numbers (P), (ii) mobile communication terminals (5) each including a means for inputting purchase-application data on a medium (8), a means for transmitting the purchase-application data on the medium (8) to the initial value-setting device (1) through a communication network (N), a means for receiving the initial number (P) of the medium (8) from the initial value-setting device (1) through the communication network (N), and a means for writing the initial number (P) in the medium (8), and (iii) a rewriting device (4) to rewrite the remaining available number of times of unitary use of said user's medium (8) every time each user makes use of the service.

8. An operating system of prepaid available number-of-times-of-unitary-use storage media (8) for making use of a certain toll or pay service comprising (i) the initial value-setting device (1) according to claim 5 which sets the initial numbers of times of unitary use (P) of the media (8) and has a means for transmitting the initial numbers (P), (ii) information-processing terminals (6) each including a means for inputting purchase-application data on a medium (8), a means for transmitting the purchase-application data on the medium (8) to the initial value-setting device (1) through a communication network (N), a means for receiving the initial number (P) of the medium (8) from the initial value-setting device (1) through the communication network (N), and a means for writing the initial number (P) in the medium (8), and (iii) a rewriting device 4 to rewrite the remaining available number of times of unitary use of said user's medium (8) every time each user makes use of the service.

9. A prepaid available number-of-times-of-unitary-use storage medium (8) for making use of a certain toll or pay service which is a storage medium to be used in the operating system (1) according to claim 6, 7, or 8 and has a rewritable storage area of a number of times of unitary use.